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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

AUGUSTIN, EVENS J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3621

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

08/17/2010

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/729,817	Applicant(s) AKAMA, KATSUAKI	
	Examiner EVENS J. AUGUSTIN	Art Unit 3621	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2010.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9 and 13-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9, 13-16 and 28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 September 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>05/13/10 and 08/06/10</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Acknowledgements

1. This is in response to an amendment filed on 06/04/10. Claims 1, 3-9, 13-28 are pending.
Claims 1, 3-9, 13-16 and 28 have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
2. Claims 1, 3-9, 13-16 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jovicic et al., (U.S. Patent No. 5,855,007) ("Jovicic") in view of Schulze, (U.S. Patent No.6497360).
3. As per claims 1, 3-9, 13-16 and 28, Jovicic et al. teach an electronic transaction method comprising:
 - A. requesting an electronic coupon from a coupon server and the server transmitting the coupon comprising a value and a customer name (figure 3; column/line 6/49-7/40) to the requesting device (column 7, lines 40-45; column/line 7/55-8/17)

- B. a customer database and recording and managing coupon owner (e.g. customer) information (figure 1, items 124 and 126; column 6, lines 3-14; column 9, lines 10-26)
- C. a redemption server changing owner information according to a transferee apparatus of said coupon (figure 4, item 422; column 7, lines 45-50; column 9, lines 23-28; column/line 10/63-11/4) –
- D. the customer transferring the coupon to a shop (column 7, lines 45-50) and also notifying the [redemption] server of the transfer (column/line 1/60-2/2; column 2, lines 30-35; column 7, lines 52-55)
- E. setting a validity term for the coupon (figure 3, item 314; column 7, lines 9-11)
- F. managing the status of the electronic coupon (figure 1, items 124 and 134; column 9, lines 10-40; column/line 10/45-11/37)
- G. [periodically) charging a user an amount corresponding to the coupon's value (figure 3, items 302 and 308; column 2, lines 25-30; column/line 6/65-7/2; column 11, lines 38-41)
- H. Jovicic also teaches an electronic coupon with real value (C6, L59-67), being used as part of a transaction. This is consistent with Webster's dictionary definition of money, which is "something generally accepted as a medium of exchange, a measure of value, or a means of payment".

4. However, Jovicic et al. do not specifically recite an invention in which ownership of an electronic coupon is transferred. However, Schulze describes an invention that relates to systems for accurately tracking the use of coupons redeemed by consumers, and for promptly reimbursing retailers for discounts extended to consumers in exchange for coupons presented to the retailer. According to Schulze, ownership of a coupon is transferred from entity to the next (C3, L53-57).
5. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to combine the teachings of Jovicic et al. and Schulze. According to Schulze, the reason for ownership transfer of coupon is to keep track of amount being spent on the coupon, according to intended used (C3, L38-50).
6. As per claims 5-7, Jovicic et al. teach an electronic coupon that includes a value (figure 3, items 302 and 308; column/line 6/59-7/2) and an owner identification number (figure 3, items 320 and 322). Laor teaches a unique key that can be used to validate or authenticate the coupon (column 4, lines 7-10). A remote server that stores a user signing key and signs data on behalf of the user using said key is old and well known. Further, to one of ordinary skill a unique key for authenticating and validating data is a signing key wherein the signing key is a private key of a public/private key pair. Regarding multiple keys, it has been held that an obvious modification of Laor is to use multiple keys to sign multiple data as the duplication of parts has no patentable significance unless new and unexpected result is produced (In re Harza, 124 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960)). It has also been held that the mere arrangement of data in memory (i.e. where the signature is found in the electronic coupon) will not distinguish the

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claims from the prior art (In re Gulack, 217 USPQ 401 (Fed. Cir. 1983), In re Ngai, 70 USPQ2d (Fed. Cir. 2004), In re Lowry, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP 2106.01).

7. As per claim 7, Jovicic et al. teach transferring the electronic coupon from a transferee apparatus to the server for authentication (column 7, lines 50-55). More specifically, the prior art teaches conveying the results to the transferee apparatus and the information terminal (column 2, lines 25-30; column 7, lines 50-55; column 11, lines 12-20), and redeeming a coupon (or changing the owner of the coupon) (column/line 10/62-11/3) based on the authentication process.
8. As per claim 12, Jovicic et al. teach charging a user an amount corresponding to the coupon's value (figure 3, items 302 and 308; column 2, lines 25-30; column/line 6/65-7/2; column 11, lines 38-41), regarding what conditional or optional language, method steps that do not have to be performed to do not limit the scope of the claim or the limitation (Intel Corp. v. Int'l Trade Comm'n, 20 USPQ2d 1161 (Fed. Cir. 1991) MPEP §2106 II C).
9. As per claims 13-16, Jovicic et al. teach storing an electronic coupon on an information terminal (figure 2, item 218 and figure 4; column 8, lines 10-32) wherein said terminal comprises a display means (figure 2, items 214 and 218; column 8, lines 18-32). Information terminals that require a user to provide a username and password in order to access the terminal are old and well known.

Response to Arguments

1. The United States Patent and Trademark Office has fully considered the applicant's arguments filed on 06/04/2010, but has not found those arguments to be persuasive.
2. The claims are being interpreted as a process between a terminal(s) and a server(s). The terminal requests a coupon to be issued by the server. The server issues the coupon. The server also manages coupon information by keeping track of ownership transfer or coupon information.
3. In this case, the prior art by Jovicic keeps track by transactions made with coupons, C3, L34-38. Part of keeping track of the transaction is by tracking user name, associated with a coupon, C9, 10-31. Lastly, Jovicic updates coupon information, as transactions are being accomplished, C6, L36-39. The only difference between Jovicic and the claimed invention is that the coupon information does not include ownership transfer of a particular coupon.
10. However, Schulze describes an invention that relates to systems for accurately tracking the use of coupons redeemed by consumers, and for promptly reimbursing retailers for discounts extended to consumers in exchange for coupons presented to the retailer. According to Schulze, ownership of a coupon is transferred from entity to the next (C3, L53-57).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to combine the teachings of Jovicic et al. and Schulze. According to Schulze, the reason for ownership transfer of coupon is to keep track of amount being spent on the coupon, according to intended used (C3, L38-50).

Conclusion

11. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Any new ground(s) of rejection is due to the applicant's amendment. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
12. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.
13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Evens Augustin whose telephone number is (571) 272-6860. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 10:00 AM-7:00 PM.
14. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Andrew Fischer, can be reached at (571) 272-6779.

/Evens J. Augustin/
Examiner Art Unit 3621
August 16, 2010